

IV. REMARKS

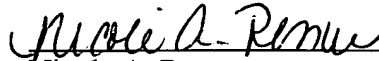
Preliminary amendments to limit the examination effort required for the claims have been made to submit certain embodiments of the present invention for examination in this initial application.

Importantly, it should be understood that the amendments submitted herein are made as a matter of practicality only, and should not to be construed as creating any situation of file wrapper estoppel or the like as all rights are expressly reserved and may be pursued in this or other applications, such as divisionals, continuations, or continuations-in-part if desired. Amendments are made for tangential issues of clarity and as a matter of the Office's convenience or expedience only. The amendments should not be interpreted as an action that in any way surrenders a particular equivalency, surrenders any right to patent coverage, or otherwise limits any rights that the Applicant may now or hereafter assert. It should be understood that, unless and to the extent deemed broadened by this amendment, and even as amended, the Applicant expressly reserves all rights, including but not limited to: all rights to maintain the scope of literal coverage with respect to any element as may have existed under the language previously presented, all rights to maintain the scope of equivalency coverage as may have existed under the language previously presented, and all rights to re-present the prior language at any time in this or any subsequent application. To the extent currently foreseeable, no change or reduction in *direct or* equivalency coverage is believed to exist, and no change or reduction in *direct or* equivalency coverage is intended through the presentation of this amendment.

Claims 10-13, 17-20, 25-26, 28-29, 32, 34-35, and 37-38 have been cancelled. Applicant requests that claims 1-9, 14-16, 21-24, 27, 30-31, 33, 36, and 39-64 – each determined to have met the requirement for unity of invention during the international stage – be examined as a single group and allowed at the examiner's earliest convenience.

Dated this 31 day of January, 2004.

Respectfully submitted,

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